

NEWTRO

where "new" meets "retro"



What is Newtro?

"Newtro" is a term that combines "new" and "retro" and refers to a design style or cultural trend that blends modern elements with nostalgic or vintage aesthetics, creating a unique and familiar yet contemporary look and feel.

Popularization and history

The Newtro trend in South Korea, driven by a shift in the 30 to 50 age group, includes TV shows, nostalgic snacks, and vintage designs. Period dramas set in the late 20th century have played a role, appealing to audiences both in South Korea and abroad. Newtro bridges generational gaps and is likely to persist due to its flexibility for fresh content, offering a retreat to simpler times amidst modern challenges and nostalgia.

Architecture and Design

Hanok

Newtro has revived the traditional Korean Hanok architecture and style in contemporary times. Hanok, originating in the 14th century during the Joseon dynasty, remains appealing in modern South Korea, leading to the integration of Hanok's characteristic features into modern living spaces.



Many cafes now incorporate retro-inspired decor, known as Hanok or Dabang style, maintaining traditional exteriors with modern interiors. Retro-style arcades have also adopted the Newtro aesthetic, offering games from the 80s and 90s, while areas like Eulji-ro in downtown Seoul combine historical and industrial elements, transforming traditional buildings into modern eateries and bakeries.



Fashion



Modern "Hanbok" clothing, inspired by traditional Korean attire from the Joseon dynasty, has been transformed into contemporary Hanbok-esque styles, gaining popularity through K-pop artists like BTS, Blackpink, and more who feature these modern versions in their music videos and concepts.

Packaging Design



Newtro culture has revived retro packaging and food products, including noodles from 30 years ago and snacks like Star Popeye, Juicy & Fresh Gum, Cheetos, popcorn, and nachos. It has also influenced beer and soju packaging, with Jinro's 1970s and 1980s soju versions selling over 100 million units in seven months, and younger generations favoring old transparent soju bottles.